

For patentability issues, bar dates, and other legal questions, a patent attorney or agent can be consulted.

5 The many features and advantages of the present invention are apparent from the detailed specification. Thus, it is intended that the present invention cover all such features and advantages falling within the scope of the invention. Further, since numerous modifications and changes will readily occur to those of ordinary skill in the art, it is not desired to limit the invention to the exact constructions and operations illustrated and described above. Accordingly, all suitable modifications and equivalents should be  
10 considered as falling within the spirit and scope of the present invention.

What is claimed is:

1. A method of identifying a full range of patentable aspects of an invention said invention having broad and narrow aspects, the method comprising:

- a) defining a first aspect of said invention, selecting a first invention type of said invention, and selecting a life cycle aspect of said invention;
- 5 b) modifying said first aspect of said invention while holding constant said first invention type and said life cycle aspect; and
- c) iterating steps (a) and (b) until said full range of patentable aspects of said invention is identified.

10 2. The method of claim 1 wherein said defining said first aspect of said invention comprises at least one of the following:

- a) drawing a picture of said invention;
- b) defining elements of said picture;
- c) defining a technical problem solved by said invention;
- 15 d) defining a business problem solved by said invention;
- e) defining impossible problems solved by said invention;
- f) defining technology used by said invention;
- g) defining products created by said invention; and
- h) defining a science needed to support said technology.

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3. The method of claim 1 wherein said modifying said first aspect of said invention comprises:

- a) asking "why" type questions leading to said broad aspects of said invention; and
- 25 b) asking "how" type questions leading to said narrow aspects of said invention.

4. The method of claim 3 wherein said first aspect of said invention is a technical problem of said invention and by asking said "why" type questions will lead to a business  
30 problem of said invention

5. The method of claim 3 wherein said first aspect of said invention is a technical problem of said invention and by asking said "how" questions will lead to a scientific problem of said invention.

5 6. The method of claim 1 wherein said first invention type is selected from a group consisting of an apparatus, a method, an article of manufacture, a composition of matter, a functional invention, and a business process.

7. The method of claim 1 wherein said life cycle aspect of said invention comprises  
10 one of the following said invention itself, a supplier who supplies a product or process to said invention and a user who uses said invention.

8. A method of identifying a full range of patentable aspects of an invention, said invention having broad and narrow aspects, the method comprising:

- 15 a) defining a first aspect of said invention, selecting a first invention type of said invention and selecting a life cycle of said invention;
- b) modifying said first invention type to a new invention type while holding said first aspect and said life cycle constant; and
- c) iterating steps (a) through (b) until all new invention types are exhausted.

20 9. The method of claim 8 wherein said first invention type is selected from a group consisting of an apparatus, a method, an article of manufacture, a composition of matter, a functional invention, and a business process.

25 10. The method of claim 8 wherein said modifying of said first invention type comprises selecting a second invention type from a group consisting of an apparatus, a method, an article of manufacture, a composition of matter, a functional invention, and a business process, said second invention type being different from said first invention type.

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11. The method of claim 8 wherein said defining said first aspect of said invention comprises at least one of the following:

- a) drawing a picture of said invention;
- b) defining elements of said picture;
- 5 c) defining a technical problem solved by said invention;
- d) defining a business problem solved by said invention;
- e) defining impossible problems solved by said invention;
- f) defining technology used by said invention;
- g) defining products that have been created by said invention; and
- 10 h) defining a science needed to support said technology.

12. The method of claim 8 wherein said life cycle aspect of said invention comprises one of the following said invention itself, a supplier who supplies a product or process to said invention and a user who uses said invention.

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13. A method of identifying a full range of patentable aspects of an invention said invention having broad and narrow aspects, the method comprising:

- a) defining a first aspect of said invention, selecting a first invention type of said invention, and selecting a life cycle aspect of the invention;
- 20 b) modifying said life cycle aspect of said invention to a new life cycle aspect while holding constant said first aspect of said invention and said first invention type;
- c) iterating steps (a) through (b) until all new life cycle aspects are covered; and

25 wherein said life cycle aspect of said invention comprises one of the following said invention itself, a supplier who supplies a product or process to said invention and a user who uses said invention.

14. The method of claim 13 wherein said modifying of said life cycle comprises  
30 asking what a supplier who supplies a product or a process to said invention may do once

the invention is made, wherein an answer may be defined as an improvement to said invention.

15. The method of claim 13 wherein said modifying of said life cycle comprises asking what a user who uses said invention may do once the invention is made, wherein an answer may be defined as an extended invention of said invention.

16. The method of claim 13 wherein said defining said first aspect of said invention comprises at least one of the following:

- 10 a) drawing a picture of said invention;
- b) defining elements of said picture;
- c) defining a technical problem solved by said invention;
- d) defining a business problem solved by said invention;
- e) defining impossible problems solved by said invention;
- 15 f) defining technology used by said invention;
- g) defining products that have been created by said invention; and
- h) defining a science needed to support said technology.

17. The method of claim 13 wherein said first invention type is selected from a group consisting of an apparatus, a method, an article of manufacture, a composition of matter, a functional invention, and a business process.

18. The method of claim 1 further comprising:

- d) selecting a new invention type different from said first invention type;
- 25 e) iterating said steps (b) and (c); and
- f) iterating steps (d) and (e) until all new invention types are exhausted.

19. The method of claim 1 further comprising

- d) selecting a new life cycle aspect of said invention;
- 30 e) iterating said steps (b) and (c); and
- f) iterating steps (d) and (e) until all new life cycle aspects of said

invention is covered.

20. The method of claim 8 further comprising:

- d) modifying said first aspect of said invention;
- 5 e) iterating steps (a) and (d) until said full range of patentable aspects of said invention is identified; and
- f) iterating steps (b) through (e) until all new invention types are exhausted.

21. The method of claim 13 further comprising:

- 10 d) selecting a new invention type different from said first invention type;
- e) iterating steps (a) and (d) until all said new invention types of said invention are exhausted; and
- f) iterating steps (b) and (e) until all new invention types are exhausted.

15 22. A method of identifying a full range of patentable aspects of an invention said invention having broad and narrow aspects, the method comprising:

- a) defining a first aspect of said invention, selecting a first invention type of said invention, and selecting a life cycle aspect of the invention;
- b) modifying said first aspect while holding constant said first invention type
- 20 and said life cycle aspect.
- c) iterating steps (a) and (b) until said full range of patentable aspects of said invention is identified;
- d) selecting a new invention type different from said first invention type;
- e) iterating steps (b) and (c); and
- 25 f) iterating steps (d) and (e) until all new invention types are exhausted.

23. The method of claim 22 wherein said defining said first aspect of said invention comprises at least one of the following:

- a) drawing a picture of said invention;
- 30 b) defining elements of said picture;
- c) defining a technical problem solved by said invention;

- 5           d)     defining a business problem solved by said invention;  
          e)     defining impossible problems solved by said invention;  
          f)     defining technology used by said invention;  
          g)     defining products that have been created by said invention; and  
          h)     defining a science needed to support said technology.

24.     The method of claim 22 wherein said modifying said first aspect of the invention comprises:

- 10           a)     asking “why” type questions leading to broad aspects of said invention;  
          and  
          b)     asking “how” type questions leading to narrow aspects of said invention.

15     25.     The method of claim 24 wherein said first aspect is a technical problem of said invention and by asking said “why” type questions will lead to a business problem of said invention.

26.     The method of claim 24 wherein said first aspect is a technical problem and asking said “how” questions will lead to a scientific problem of said invention.

20     27.     The method of claim 22 wherein said first invention type is selected from a group consisting of an apparatus, a method, an article of manufacture, a composition of matter, a functional invention, and a business process.

25     28.     The method of claim 22 wherein said life cycle aspect of said invention comprises one of the following said invention itself, a supplier who supplies a product or process to said invention and a user who uses said invention.

30     29.     A method of identifying a full range of patentable aspects of an invention said invention having broad and narrow aspects, the method comprising:  
          a)     defining a first aspect of said invention, selecting a first invention type of said invention, and selecting a life cycle aspect of the invention;

- b) modifying said life cycle aspect while holding constant said first invention type and said first aspect of the invention;
- c) iterating steps (a) and (b) until all life cycle aspects are covered;
- d) modifying said first invention type to a new invention type;
- 5 e) iterating steps (b) and (c); and
- f) iterating steps (d) and (e) until all new invention types are exhausted.

30. The method of claim 29 wherein said defining said first aspect of said invention comprises at least one of the following:

- 10 a) drawing a picture of said invention;
- b) defining elements of said picture;
- c) defining a technical problem solved by said invention;
- d) defining a business problem solved by said invention;
- e) defining impossible problems solved by said invention;
- 15 f) defining technology used by said invention;
- g) defining products that have been created by said invention; and
- h) defining a science needed to support said technology.

31. The method of claim 29 wherein said first invention type is selected from a group consisting of an apparatus, a method, an article of manufacture, a composition of matter, a functional invention, and a business process.

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32. The method of claim 29 wherein said life cycle aspect of said invention comprises one of the following said invention itself, a supplier who supplies a product or process to said invention and a user who uses said invention.

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33. The method of claim 29 wherein said modifying of said life cycle comprises asking what a supplier who supplies a product or a process to said invention may do once the invention is made, wherein an answer may be defined as an improvement to said invention.

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34. The method of claim 29 wherein said modifying of said life cycle comprises asking what a user who uses said invention may do once the invention is made, wherein an answer may be defined as an extended invention of said invention.

5 35. A method of identifying a full range of patentable aspects of an invention said invention having broad and narrow aspects, the method comprising:

a) defining a first aspect of said invention, selecting a first invention type of said invention, and selecting a life cycle aspect of the invention;

b) modifying said first aspect of the invention while holding constant said  
10 first invention type and said life cycle;

c) iterating steps (a) and (b) until said full range of patentable aspects of the invention is defined;

d) modifying said life cycle aspect of said invention;

e) iterating steps (b) and (c); and

15 f) iterating steps (d) and (e) until all life cycle aspects of said invention are covered.

36. The method of claim 35 wherein said defining said first aspect of said invention comprises at least one of the following:

20 a) drawing a picture of said invention;

b) defining elements of said picture;

c) defining a technical problem solved by said invention;

d) defining a business problem solved by said invention;

e) defining impossible problems solved by said invention;

25 f) defining technology used by said invention;

g) defining products that have been created by said invention; and

h) defining a science needed to support said technology.

37. The method of claim 35 wherein said modifying said first aspect of the invention  
30 comprises:

- a) asking “why” type questions leading to broad aspects of said invention;  
and
- b) asking “how” type questions leading to narrow aspects of said invention.

5 38. The method of claim 37 wherein said first aspect is a technical problem of said invention and by asking said “why” type questions will lead to a business problem of said invention.

10 39. The method of claim 37 wherein said first aspect is a technical problem of said invention and by asking said “how” questions will lead to a scientific problem of said invention.

15 40. The method of claim 35 wherein said first invention type is selected from a group consisting of an apparatus, a method, an article of manufacture, a composition of matter, a functional invention, and a business process.

20 41. The method of claim 35 wherein said life cycle aspect of said invention comprises one of the following said invention itself, a supplier who supplies a product or process to said invention and a user who uses said invention.

25 42. The method of claim 35 wherein said modifying of said life cycle comprises asking what a supplier who supplies a product or a process to said invention may do once the invention is made, wherein an answer may be defined as an improvement to said invention.

43. The method of claim 35 wherein said modifying of said life cycle comprises asking what a user who uses said invention may do once the invention is made, wherein an answer may be defined as an extended invention of said invention.

30 44. A method of identifying a full range of patentable aspects of an invention said invention having broad and narrow aspects, the method comprising:

a) defining a first aspect of said invention, selecting a first invention type of said invention, and selecting a life cycle aspect of the invention;

b) modifying said first aspect of the invention while holding constant said first invention type and said life cycle;

5 c) iterating steps (a) and (b) until said full range of patentable aspects of the invention is defined;

d) modifying said first invention type to a new invention type;

e) iterating steps (b) and (c);

f) iterating steps (d) and (e) until all new invention types are exhausted;

10 g) modifying said life cycle aspect of said invention; and

h) iterating steps (b) through (g) until all life cycle aspects of said invention are covered.

45. The method of claim 44 wherein said defining said first aspect of said invention  
15 comprises at least one of the following:

a) drawing a picture of said invention;

b) defining elements of said picture;

c) defining a technical problem solved by said invention;

d) defining a business problem solved by said invention;

20 e) defining impossible problems solved by said invention;

f) defining technology used by said invention;

g) defining products that have been created by said invention; and

h) defining a science needed to support said technology.

25 46. The method of claim 44 wherein said modifying said first aspect of the invention comprises:

a) asking "why" type questions leading to broad aspects of said invention;  
and

b) asking "how" type questions leading to narrow aspects of said invention.

47. The method of claim 46 wherein said first aspect is a technical problem of said invention and by asking said “why” type questions will lead to a business problem of said invention.

5 48. The method of claim 46 wherein said first aspect is a technical problem of said invention and by asking said “how” type questions will lead to a scientific problem of said invention.

10 49. The method of claim 44 wherein said first invention type is selected from a group consisting of an apparatus, a method, an article of manufacture, a composition of matter, a functional invention, and a business process.

15 50. The method of claim 44 wherein said life cycle aspect of said invention comprises one of the following said invention itself, a supplier who supplies a product or process to said invention and a user who uses said invention.

20 51. The method of claim 44 wherein said modifying of said life cycle comprises asking what a supplier who supplies a product or a process to said invention may do once the invention is made, wherein an answer may be defined as an improvement to said invention.

25 52. The method of claim 44 wherein said modifying of said life cycle comprises asking what a user who uses said invention may do once the invention is made, wherein an answer may be defined as an extended invention of said invention.

53. A method of training an inventor in identifying a full range of patentable aspects of an invention, the method comprising:

- a) educating said inventor on what constitutes a patentable invention;
- b) educating said inventor on patentable invention subject matter concepts;

c) educating said inventor on what constitutes an invention type wherein said invention type is selected from a group consisting of an apparatus, a method, an article of manufacture, a composition of matter, a functional invention, and a business process;

5 e) educating said inventor on what constitutes an invention life cycle aspect wherein said life cycle aspect of said invention comprises one of the following said invention itself, a supplier who supplies a product or process to said invention and a user who uses said invention; and

f) educating said inventor on an invention scanning process said scanning process comprising identifying a full range of patentable aspects of an invention.

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54. A method of documenting a full range of patentable aspects of an invention, the method comprising:

a) interviewing an inventor wherein said interview comprises capturing a title of said invention, a brief description of said invention, inventorship of said invention, and bar dates of said invention;

b) identifying a full range of patentable aspects of the invention; and

c) recording said interview of said inventor.

55. The method of claim 54 wherein said recording is accomplished by any one of the following paper and pencil, computer word processing, tape recorder, and video recorder.

56. A method of reducing a documented list of inventions to a minimal group of inventions needed to capture a defined intellectual property space wherein said intellectual property space is defined by an assignee's business strategy and business drivers, the method comprising:

a) capturing said business strategy and business drivers of said assignee by interviewing said assignee;

b) comparing said business strategy and business drivers to said defined intellectual property space and said documented list of inventions; and

c) selecting said inventions from said documented list of inventions, which capture said defined intellectual property space, said business strategy and said business drivers.

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